

EXHIBIT 1

Richard Carrier,
“Regarding the Accusations
Made by Amy Frank”
(June 15, 2016)

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Regarding the Accusations Made by Amy Frank

BY RICHARD CARRIER / ON JUNE 15, 2016 / 82 COMMENTS

An accusation has recently been published against me that warrants a reply. In its original form on Facebook (of which I only had screen caps that were sent to me), dated on or around 15 June 2016, **Amy Frank** (as identified by her profile; I have only known her by a different surname until now) wrote:

“

Parents, and younger people who may graciously volunteer for Camp Quest, a summer camp for kids.

Richard Carrier, the man who sexually harassed me and touched me a year ago [2015–ed.] after speaking at ASU [Arizona State University–ed.] is now an official employee of this organization. Campus Quest [sic–ed.] and the Secular Student Alliance are partners, and fully aware of what transpired last year. I'm not

About Me



Richard Carrier is the author of many books and numerous articles online and in print. His avid readers span the world from Hong Kong to Poland. With a Ph.D. in ancient history from Columbia University, he specializes in the modern philosophy of naturalism, humanism, and feminism, and the origins of Christianity and the

even close to being his only victim, and there are even more victims of other speakers of the SSA.

Want to know why he continues to be involved after being banned from being an SSA speaker? He is dating the wife of the Executive Director of the Secular Student Alliance.

Corrupt people continue to destroy what could be wonderful organizations. I am officially BOYCOTTING the national Secular Student Alliance until their leadership is completely dismantled.

Students deserve to have an organization capable of handling sexual harassment and assault, with no conflicts of interest. Not only is abuse fairly common at SSA events, but the organization itself goes out of their way to undermine the reports of its very own members' trauma.

I've held my tongue far too long. No more sweeping this shit under the rug. Time to own the fuck up and face the music. The victims have had enough.

If you've been a victim of harassment or assault at any SSA-sponsored event, please feel free to contact me. I will keep your name confidential.

There are a number errors in this comment.

In terms of public facts: I am not an employee of either Camp Quest or the SSA, or any of their affiliates. Nor am I on their boards of directors or speakers' bureaus. I have rarely even volunteered for them. And "the wife of the Executive Director of the Secular Student Alliance" is a strange way to refer to Amanda Metskas, who is actually the national Executive Director of Camp Quest, which Amy seems to be concerned about. Amanda and I are indeed dating. But she and her husband, August Brunsman, are publicly polyamorous, and also consummate professionals, and recuse themselves from any decisions their respective organizations

intellectual history of Greece and Rome, with particular expertise in ancient philosophy, science and technology. He is also a noted defender of scientific and moral realism, Bayesian reasoning, and historical methods.

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may have to make regarding me, or any of their partners (even each other).

I am also not aware of “more victims of other speakers of the SSA” or any instance in which the SSA has “undermine[d] the reports of its very own members’ trauma,” much less gone out of their way to. I don’t even see any evidence of this by Amy’s own account (wherein she says I was removed from the SSA speaker’s bureau after her complaint, which sounds like quite the opposite of undermining her report). Though I wouldn’t likely know of any other incidents if there were, I’m not sure how she would know either. To the contrary, in my experience the SSA is hyper-vigilant on policing sexual harassment and they go out of their way to handle those cases with considerable respect for complainants. Nor do I know who she could be referring to when she says she is “not even close to being [my] only victim.” The worst I’ve ever done is still what I reported myself last year in **Doing Wrong Right**. None of which involved Amy—because I didn’t consider our actual interaction to be at all bad.

Our Interaction

Which brings us to her interaction with me. I did not touch her. Nor did the SSA tell me she had claimed so. And indeed, our interaction was more ambiguous than she makes out. Apart from publicly flattering her abilities as I would anyone as competent, we had one private conversation in which she expressed interest in opening her relationship with her then-boyfriend (or husband?), but noted he wasn’t sure about it yet. In response to that I mentioned that if she ever does, I’d be interested in dating her, and she should feel free to contact me if that happens. She smiled and said she would. That was the extent of our interaction, [which is not sexual harassment, nor what she is describing now]. Amy also mentioned in that conversation that her then-boyfriend reads her private emails and messages. Implying I shouldn’t attempt to contact her. Even though I hadn’t said I would.

That was in April of 2015. A few weeks later I was informed by the SSA that a complaint had been filed, that I had “made sexual advances toward a student after a recent event” and that that “student felt that they had made

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clear that such advances were unwelcome and felt very uncomfortable,” and that there were witnesses. This did not describe my interaction with Amy at all. So I assumed they meant someone else (whom I did talk about in my **Doing Wrong Right** article), the only person I had ever interacted with at an SSA event [*correction*: it was not an SSA event] that could be described that way. I hadn’t ever expressed interest in anyone else who hadn’t already expressed interest in me first, and certainly none of them had indicated our desires didn’t align; nor were there witnesses present to any of my interaction with Amy that could possibly be imagined inappropriate.

It wasn’t until months later that I learned that that person, whom I did wrong, did not file a complaint; but that Amy had. Which left me perplexed. Our interaction did not match what I was being told. I discovered who the actual complainant was when I was later a volunteer driver for an SSA conference she attended (unbeknownst to me) and the SSA asked me to keep my distance from her at her request. That required their telling me who she was. I happily obliged. I didn’t care what her actual reasons were; if someone wants me to avoid them, I will, as far as reasonable, and this was perfectly reasonable to accomplish. But I now knew the complaint against me was not fully honest.

I let that lie. I did not mention any of this to the SSA. I just went along with their assessment and requests. I didn’t want to kick the hornet’s nest of someone already willing to be dishonest (and who, I thought, might be in an abusive relationship that had somehow driven her to this). And since the inaccurate complaint she filed *did* accurately describe something else I had done that hadn’t been complained about, I figured the cosmic scales of justice were balanced. In outcomes, IMO, all was fair.

I immediately responded to the SSA’s report to me with this (email of 21 April 2015):

“ ”

Thank you. I did express interest in a student at an after event.

And I recognized she did not appreciate that, and I apologized to

her at the time. If she does want any further apology, I will definitely provide her one, so do relay that if that's the case. But I don't want to bother her by contacting her any further without her consent. I definitely felt bad about it. I thought the interest was mutual and I was very wrong. I won't be doing that in future.

And I haven't. Nor had anything comparable happened before.

Outcome

Within a month [*correction*: a few months] of (what turned out to be) Amy's complaint I had already agreed to resign from the SSA speaker's bureau in compliance with the filed complaint and their zero tolerance policy. [And no longer on the bureau, I was no longer subject to that policy.] Their bureau is not an employment contract, but merely a promotional opportunity (individual affiliates can peruse the bureau catalog and get some funding from the SSA to put on an event with anyone on it they choose; beyond that the speakers are not actually affiliated with the SSA in any way [nor do affiliates have to choose speakers from the bureau]). The actual incident that I believe warranted my removal from that list, I described a year ago in **Doing Wrong Right**. And it involved a wholly unconnected person and happened in a different state.

So the SSA didn't have to pick sides in a dispute. There wasn't any dispute. I did not challenge the complaint (believing it to be describing the only actual incident it could possibly have been describing). And they already noted that I had publicly said **years ago** that if I wanted to have the freedom to date students (and thus express interest in them), and the SSA insisted on that being against policy, "I'd just withdraw from the SSA Speaker's Bureau." So we agreed that's what I should do. And I did. I haven't been on it for over a year. And I since date or have dated students or former students, without incident.

Regarding the Accusations Made by Amy Laird, Richard Carrier

This is, in fact, the only action the SSA could have taken in this case even for an *egregious* harrassment incident [*correction*: an egregious incident they could publicize the facts of only after a proper investigation, which it does not appear she called for at the time]. So it's not clear what more Amy expected them to do. And it's certainly not clear what she thinks constitutes the SSA going "out of their way to undermine" her report. Even by her own account they did the opposite.

Aside

One final thing that strikes me as strange in all this is that on June 10, [Facebook posted] (without my noticing, due to moving in to a new place and laboring to make manuscript deadlines) a declaration on my wall that I had started working for Camp Quest West on June 10. This I must assume triggered Amy's comment (though how she noticed it is another question). I deleted that declaration, as being not even remotely true. But I do not know [how it was posted]. It wasn't indicated as coming from anyone. [And my having posted it was not listed in my activity log.] I'm told that Facebook sometimes automatically does this if someone *else* posts that they had worked with you at a place in the past; and I was on two occasions a one-day volunteer instructor at Camp Quest West **way back in 2007 and 2009**. Of which there are **photos**. Possibly someone recently labeled one in a way that generated the Facebook announcement. [I have since determined that this is what happened, as a post of June 9 that someone else sent to my wall for approval, and that I approved on June 10, said they were happy to "join the ranks of" me and others, including Camp Quest, tagging them and me. Facebook's algorithm read that as an employment announcement, so when I approved it, it appears that Facebook automatically generated an employment life event for it.] As Camp Quest and all its affiliates will confirm, I've never worked for Camp Quest nor have there ever been any plans that I would. I'm also not doing any volunteer work for them this year. I haven't in years.

Conclusion

This is a complete account of my knowledge and experience related to this claim. And I don't find Amy's comment to be an honest representation of it. Nor, because of that, do I trust her to tell the truth. But as our relevant interaction was private, there isn't any way to corroborate either of our accounts.

[Update: See new information in **comment below**.]

[Update: An official investigation will soon be completed in this matter.]

-:-

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PM

Update: Statement from the SSA.

REPLY



ANTAGONIST • JUNE 18,

2016, 6:24 PM

The accuser is a female so it is to be
automatically believed. #ListenAndBelieve